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MP NEWS

Volume XII Nov.-Dec. 1970 Number VII



[.....ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS.....]

G O V E R N O R



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MP NEWS

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Nov.-Dec. 1970

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The M.R NEWS is published monthly by the men of Montana State Prison at Deer Lodge, Montana, with the permission of the Warden, Prison Administration and the Board of Institutions.

The purpose of this publication is to give inmates the opportunity for self expression; to provide a medium for discussion of public problems; to foster better understanding between inmates and the public; and to be constructively informative.

The M.P. NEWS does not, nor is it intended to reflect the view or opinions of the Board of Institutions or the Staff of Montana State Prison.

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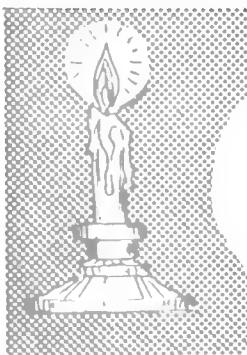
MPnews

CHRISTMAS WITH LOVE

Soon we will observe the most Holy of days, Christmas. For some it will be a day of remembrance. They shall be able to recall happier times with families and friends; past holiday seasons filled with warmth and tenderness that sets man above himself. To some, this experience is a dream to look forward to.

Yes, in the depth of our prison, each in his way, we will know that a spirit called Christmas. It will touch us all, generating goodwill, compassion and brotherhood that relegates man-made laws to obsolescence. For a time, even the bigot will think of us as men, not convicts. Thus, it is as men, that we of Montana State Prison dedicate this issue of the MP NEWS to those we love and cherish. And to everyone, everywhere may we wish you a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

ABOUT THE COVER



Seven year old Valarie Ericson, a second grader in the Deer Lodge Public Schools, is the first member of the distaff set to ever appear on the cover of the MP NEWS.

We first met this young lady during the summer at a Girl Scout Encampment. (She insists that she is a Brownie not a Girl Scout.) She had such a captivating smile and winsome personality that we decided right then and there that we would like to use her photograph in our Christmas issue.

Unlike most females she's not in the least vain---because when we asked her, she told us, "I'd much rather Santa Claus brought me a Barbee Doll for Christmas than my two front teeth."

To us, like little children everywhere, Valeric personifies everything that Christmas stands for, FAITH, LOVE and JOY.

PAGE ONE

MPnews EDITORIAL

AND A HO HO HO TO YOU TOO!

The Christmas season is said to be the only time of year that we live in the past. That little red suit one shuffles the morn, or carries gifts, is the Santa Claus we all know, the balsam airplane fit will always remain in our minds in its own elegance to your very own land of Oz. Unlike any other time of the year, Christmas provokes memories. Some of your most pleasant memories will have to include those mornings when the sock, which you had hung so hopefully, usually contained a single orange, an apple and a handful of pecans. There's no doubt about that jelly, fat can in the red suit and the white socks hanging from the tree.

Then when it comes into our beds that this very same man in the red suit had such absolute confidence in us with what he's figment of the imagination----then your world falls into total desolation. Your dreams have fallen in all safety appears to be lost. And worse is one more thing about the loss of a dream; it doesn't come little; it crushes and shatters. It is a timeless force to build it up again. To a child, this is a world which is never quite whole again. It is an aching kind of longing.

Christmas has come to be mistreated, so contradictory..... Privately it is a commercial extravaganza, less and less a day to come and go, the birthday of Christ. In the respects Christmas has lost its true significance.

How in the world do we say, "Merry Christmases", to a man in prison? Try to stretch out the idea even till it's crazy. It's strange, but almost to a man everyone wishes to see the world in the mists of the festive holidays, but few, very few care to "merry Christmases". Christmas in prison is very personal and concerned with very personal thoughts. Certainly we all wish to be remembered by this holier, but relatively safe from outside our daily existence.

FOLLOWING ON THE HEEL OF CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS COMES A ROUND UP OF 1970 WITH THE PFT'S PREDICTIONS FOR 1970:

In the past eight months of putting this publication together the Squashin and I have come to learn that if I do an in-depth story, it's too long. If I condense one, it's too brief. I have two sides on an issue we weren't being objective. If we had to be more of jelly fish. If we asked for advice we were incompetent. If we argued, we did insult-it-alls.

Our editorial thrust has been one of trying to improve the understanding of commonly misunderstood social problems existing among the public and the prisoner. We hope that we can help to foster the concept that prisoners are people.

In eight months time, the Squashin has provided a challenge. . . .



readers will have to decide how well it has been met. In a review of the year there are three issues in particular which stand out in our minds.

(JY) This was our first issue and we introduced it with a brand new format and what we hoped was a new concept in prison journalism. Included in this issue was an introduction to a "NEW ERA" in prison philosophy in the personage of W.J. Estelle Jr., Warden. It was a first attempt at trying to give Montana's citizens undistorted knowledge of their prison, the men that operate it, and the men who are confined here.

(JUNE) Featured a concerned juvenile jurist and his program for the handling of youthful offenders. Judge Wilson's plan, we've found, WORKS!!!!

There was a time when we thought we knew something about our young people but, as we put this issue together we found out, we hardly knew a thing.

It still remains difficult for us to understand some of today's youth----we are speaking about the small, but highly vocal minority----the ones who are so incredibly naive that they equate fornication with love, liberty with license, freedom with selfishness; that small group of our young people who are so irrationally hypocritical that they get stoned on pot while decrying air pollution, they scream about our getting out of Viet Nam while advocating more arms for Israel, and then some of them have the unmitigated gall to express disgust with the Profit Making Establishment while greedily squandering every dime of their parents' money they can get their hands on for items of luxury, items made by this Establishment. We wonder if we will ever understand.

(OCTOBER) This was the issue in which we tried to tell you about the weekend that Christ came to prison. The CURSILLO----a moving, beautiful experience. An experience, in which those of us who attended, saw living examples of such basic truths as Courage, Faith, Love and Brotherhood.

These are the 1970 issues which stand out in our minds. What does '71 hold? If only we knew. It looks promising. Right now even, word is being awaited on the proposal of an I.D.T.C. program. (vocational training) A new institution has been proposed and this proposal represents firm evidence of the determination of Wm. Estelle and his staff to carry on the important reforms which have gotten underway this past year. A new institution would promise a far more favorable climate for that progress.

For over ninety-eight years, Montana State Prison provided its prisoners with a place to eat and sleep----and little else.

But, in the last year we have begun to emerge from the dark shadows of a century-old concept of warehouse-type custodial care into the sunshine of a more modern commitment to a program of effective treatment.

And whether or not to admit it or not it is a credit to the administration that they have managed to accomplish as much as they have in spite of the present archaic, fortress-like physical plant. A new institution would greatly speed the process to a goal of comprehensive treatment for inmates.

Montana State Prison is not, as yet, the place it should be and it's not the place I want it to be, but thank God it's not the place it used to be. In conclusion, "A.F., P., J., D.O.Y.C., MAY 1971 BRING ALL YOUR HEART'S DESIRES."



1970 IN RETROSPECT

VOLUME XII, NUMBER VII...the close of another year...a year that marked the beginning of a "New Era".

Appropos of an auspicious start towards realization of long sought for goals in rehabilitation here at M.S.P. ...the MP NEWS began it's twelfth year with a new hope, new format...a new attitude.

With objectivity as the main goal and a line of communication between inmate, administration and the public as the primary purpose of publication, the year's efforts have been rewarded with purpose, enlightenment and...acceptance.

In pondering the past months sometimes toilsome endeavors...it's well worth the pause for reflection...and introspection.

The inevitable questions of honest effort, creativity, sensitivity...and objectivity rear their argumentative heads. The pros and cons of progressive journalism (an open mind to the problems existent) and the publishing (presenting cogently, the many-faceted problems of penology) of a multitude of penological perplexities that face the inmate, the administration and the public would, at first signs, seem insurmountable. But there must be a beginning.

We hope we have offered just that.

By way of review of our past efforts...may we offer in the ensuing pages, a visual reminder (perhaps some tidbits for future thought) of a year that marked the beginning of...a new era.

M.S.P. 1970...In Retrospect!



A NEW ERA

MP NEWS

VOLUME XII

MAY 1970

NUMBER ONE



W. J. "Jim" Estelle Jr.



DOORS

I have survived my ordeal behind the many doors. Survived the cacophony of clanging doors, the never to be forgotten resounding ring of steel on steel. In but a moment the rusty, creaking door. . . shall swing closed behind me.....hopefully.....
HOPEFULLY FOR THE LAST TIME.....

MP NEWS

MP NEWS

A NEW APPROACH
BY A CONCERNED JURIST

VOLUME XII

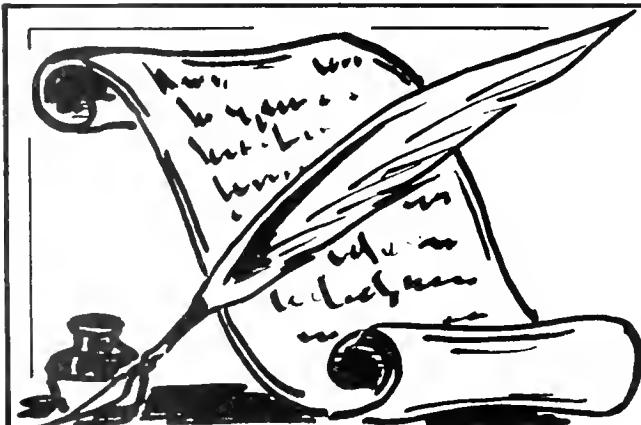
JUNE 1970

NUMBER TWO



THE HONORABLE ROBERT H. WILSON

YOUTH
AND A CONCERNED JURIST
Robert H. Wilson



AN OPEN.....
.....LETTER
to YOUTH



MP NEWS

CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

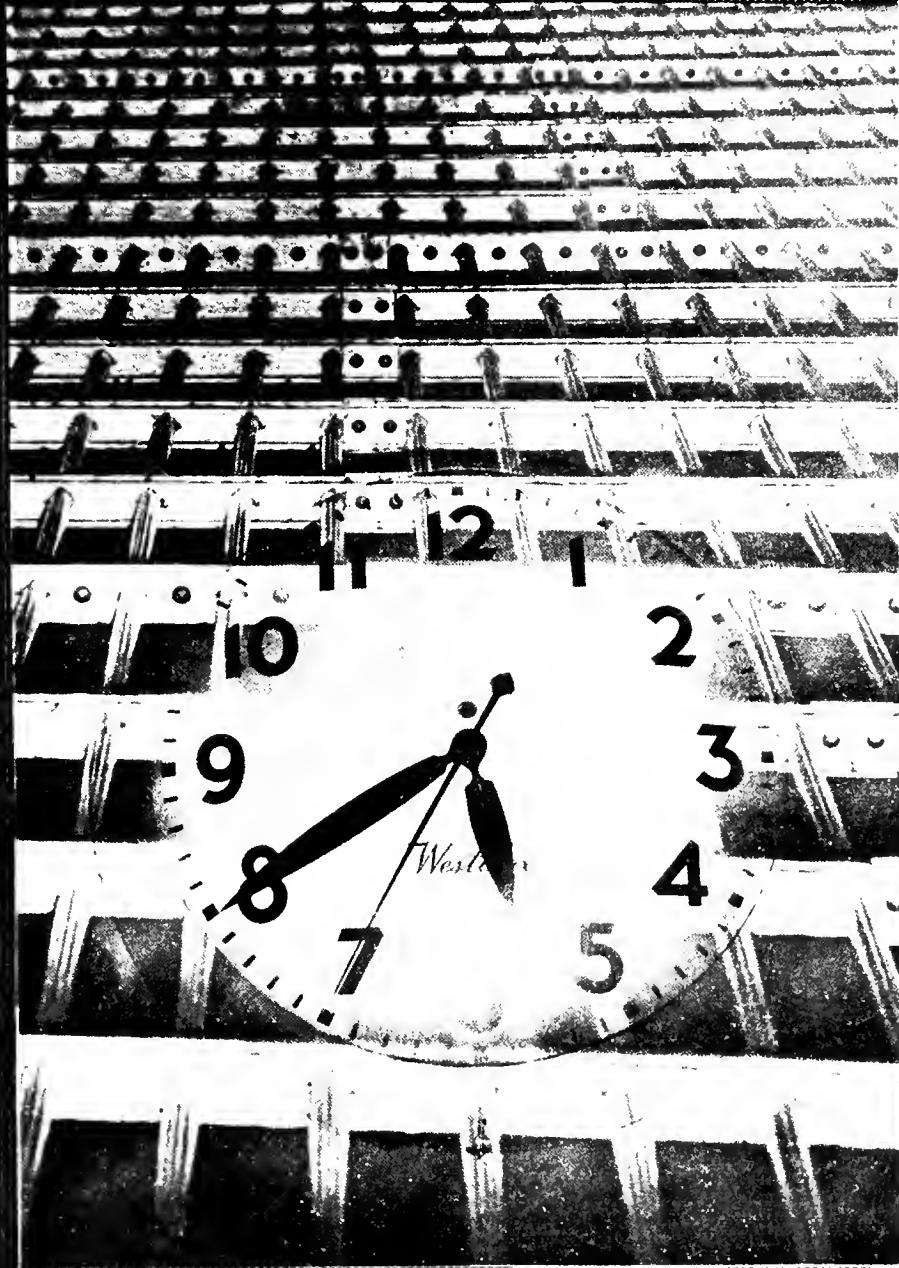
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REV. ANTHONY F. GREGORI

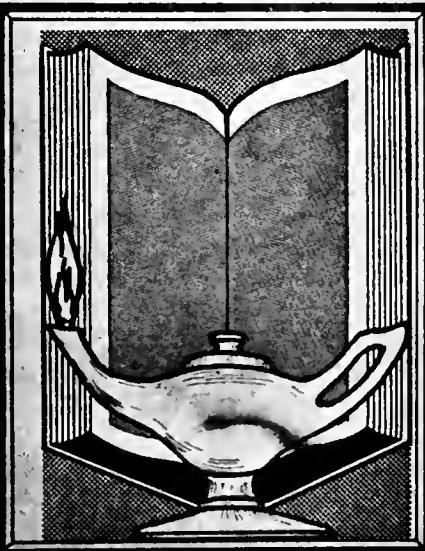


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EDUCATION M.S.P. '70

If you were to walk around Montana State Prison on any given day...it is doubtful that you would see anything that resembled these pictures.

The title implies...a feeling of prison...rather than a pictorial display of environment. If they appear to be a dramatization in picture form, it's because the mood of prison is dramatic. The loneliness, humiliation, fear, lack of communication and waste are all contributory factors in creating an atmosphere realized only in the innermost depths of the inmate's mind. The attitudes they breed are even worse...bitterness, contempt, cynicism and hate.

The implication is not that these are the only "feelings" in prison, or that they are predominant. There is however a more conscious awareness...more so than in a normal society offering a freedom of expression and adequate outlets for feelings such as those depicted here.

Prison is much like a giant magnifying glass...perceptively intensifying everything...a thought, a mood or ...time. In the following pages we have tried to present that intensification in photographic form...the eye of man's mind recording.....



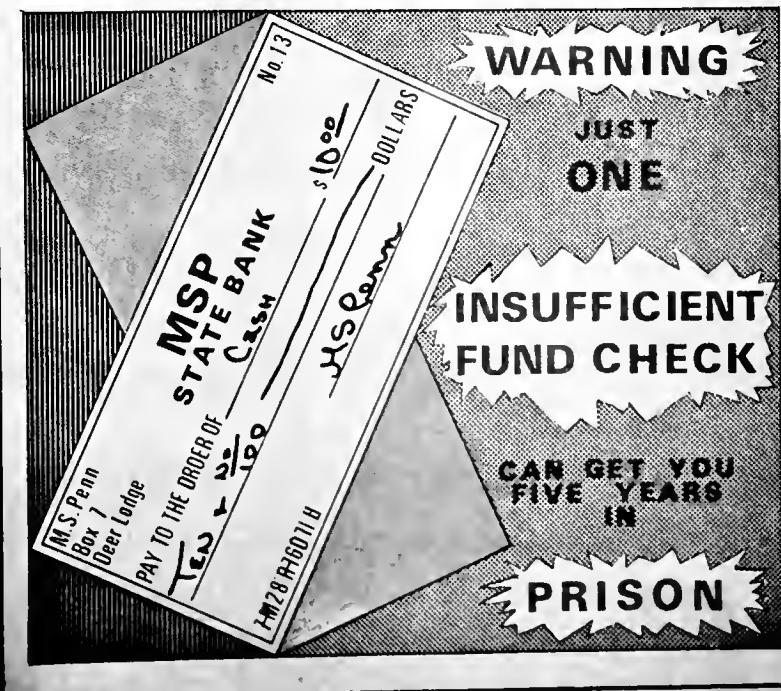
THE FEELING OF...

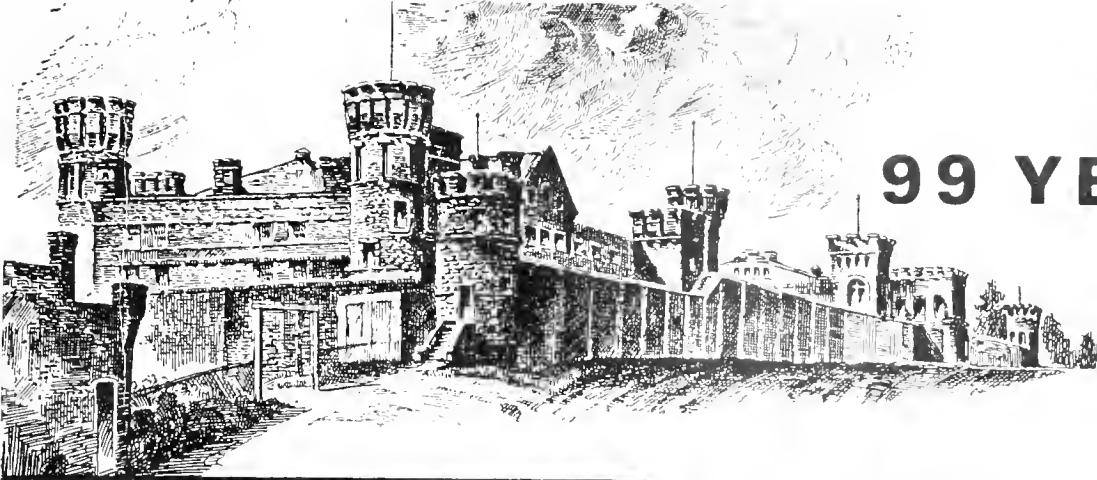
PRISON



MP NEWS

VOLUME XII SEPT. 1970 NUMBER V





The First 99 YEARS

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MPnews **FOTO-FEATURE**

1871 - 1970

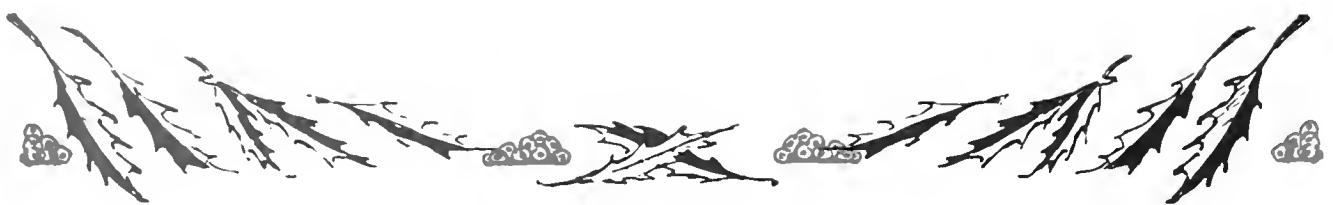
PART THREE

In Parts One and Two of the FIRST 99 YEARS...we flipped through pages of Territorial Prison history. Attempting to give a comprehensive pictorial look at the institution's origin and development (or lack of it)...we can only skip rather lightly over the multitude of material made available within the limits of confinement.

The Third and final part of this limited pictorial presentation deals in the main with...a recapitulation of what has already been shown...and an attempt to knit the threads of tangible evidence together into a pictorial whole that does give a positive overall panorama of the times, the place and...the men.

The construction, the buildings, the walls...the newness (even archaic at the time)...the physical decay into an illusion of antiquity and delusion of necessity...the folkways and mores, the faces of men in an endless parade of duplicity, complicity, humanity, inhumanity, brutality and brotherly love, hate, violence, fear and degradation...it's all there...as we take another look...with PART THREE...of THE FIRST 99 YEARS!





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THE DAY
CHRIST
CAME
TO PRISON....

R. Vigil

THE PAROLE BOARD

PAROLE!!! That most powerful word of hope for the incarcerated. Appearance dates, the speculation of an approved plan and the Parole Board itself are probably thought about and discussed to a greater extent than any other one topic within the confines of a prison. (It's utterly amazing what brilliant, benevolent, far-sighted men the Board members are when a parole is granted and what malevolent, improvident, chowder-heads they turn out to be when parole is denied.)

It isn't intended that this article convey the impression that it contains the "quoted" opinions of any member/members of the Board of Pardon and Parole. But, it is written with, what we hope has been, a degree of objectivity. In writing it----perhaps----we have been able to capture some of the thinking of the gentlemen of the Board of Pardon and Parole.



The State of Montana's Board of Pardon and Parole is comprised of three men. Pictured from the left; The Chairman, Mr. George Vucanovich, a businessman from Helena; the Secretary, Mr. Floyd C. Hamilton, a banker from Livingston; and Member, Mr. Jack L. Peterson, an attorney from Butte.



What is Parole? Or better why Parole? This is a question that everyone, whether outside or inside a Penal institution asks----then answers to their own satisfaction----and frequently to their own confusion. To the person who is confined, the question can mean: Why shouldn't I be paroled, since I'm eligible by law? To the citizen, the question can mean: What's he doing out? The judge gave him ten years and he's only been there four!!!

It is quite possible there is no more awesome chair to sit in than that of a member of a Parole Hearing Board. The rehabilitation or complete destruction of a human life is frequently in his hands. And add to this the ultimate in responsibility, through a mis-judgement, the lives of innocent citizens on the outside may be held in the balance. This is said with all respect to the Judiciary who sit making the decision, based solely upon the evidence at the time, and viewing the man shortly after the crime has been committed. This is the only man he can judge. The Judiciary must rely upon the Parole Board to either keep their decision in good faith, or temper it with mercy if the rehabilitative process shows positive results.

In forming a philosophy of parole, many things must be kept in mind. First, parole is a privilege not a right. It is granted for a reason, not as a just due. The very vocabulary (used regarding parole) of the parole function indicates this. The words, "eligible, granted, denied, paroled to approved plan," and all the other terms are indicative of the fact that parole is not something that must be accomplished, but rather, MAY COME TO PASS!!!

Yet, if it has truly been earned, isn't it the right of the inmate to anticipate parole? Indeed it is! The secret comes in the definition of "EARNED", and therin lies the philosophy that must be developed. And this philosophy must be developed by not only the members of the Parole Board, but also by the inmate applicant. The question immediately arises: Just who does a Parole Board member think he is? And within the confines of these boundaries the answer becomes: He's a human being who has the weight of responsibility of attempting to determine an inmate's future, whether constructive or otherwise.

Back within the narrow confines of decision, the philosophy on which to predicate a decision develops on the basis of the following criteria.

FIRST: What were the surroundings and influences pertaining to the incident? Have they changed?

SECOND: What has the inmate done to correct and improve himself so as to prevent recurrence or recidivism?

THIRD: What does he plan to do to become and remain successful back within society?

FOURTH: What can parole do, and what can it continue to do to help him be successful?

Elementary though these questions may seem, they result in mind-grabbing decisions time and time again. The thoughts are simple; the decision is final; and the hope is eternal. Did the Parole Board help? Will it work? Only time and the inmate can either justify their faith or prove them wrong. The ultimate outcome is dependent on the inmate.



VALARIE ERICSON
Cover Girl
Visits MPNews





FROM THE WARDEN:

TO THE MEN IN MONTANA STATE PRISON.

The Christmas season is a most difficult time to be away from loved ones at home. I can only wish for all of you that you are returned to your homes as quickly as possible.

Many times, it seems to me, that men thrown together under adverse circumstances have the capacity and opportunity to practice a kind of concern for their fellow man that few people experience. I am not suggesting that people come to prison to find this out, but those of you here can certainly learn a lot about tolerance and brotherhood even more keenly than those of us outside are willing to practice many times.

As we start the new year, I encourage each one of you to take advantage of any positive program that may, in some way, hasten your return home and help you to remain with your family. As you go about your everyday assignments, remember that the habits and attitudes you develop will be, to some degree, carried with you when you leave.

I want to take this opportunity to inform you of a modification regarding good time lost as the result of a parole violation. In the past it has been the practice that all good time earned prior to parole was forfeited upon violation of parole. For a good many months now, we have not caused any good time to be forfeited as the result of parole violation. We have, instead, suspended the good time awaiting clarification and approval of our new policy.

Hereafter, good time earned prior to a parole violation will continue to be suspended and reviewed toward the end of your sentence and a decision made at that time about reinstatement of the good time. The decision will be based on several factors: adjustment and behavior after return from parole violation; participation in programs available at the prison that increase your potential for staying out of prison; in short, your own mature, responsible adult behavior will earn reinstatement of the suspended good time.

It will not be necessary for you to apply for consideration. Every eligible man's file since last December will be reviewed. In the future all eligible men will automatically be reviewed prior to discharge. New time cards for those men who receive reinstatement will be issued.

Please bear with us as we start this new policy and don't besiege the Identification Bureau with questions and letters, we'll get to it as quickly as possible.

Finally - BEST WISHES OF THE SEASON TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.



/s/ W. J. ESTELIE JR.

M.S.P. TOY SHOP



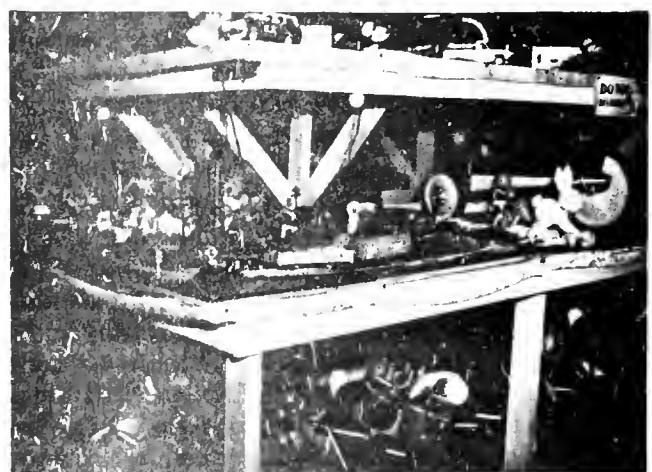
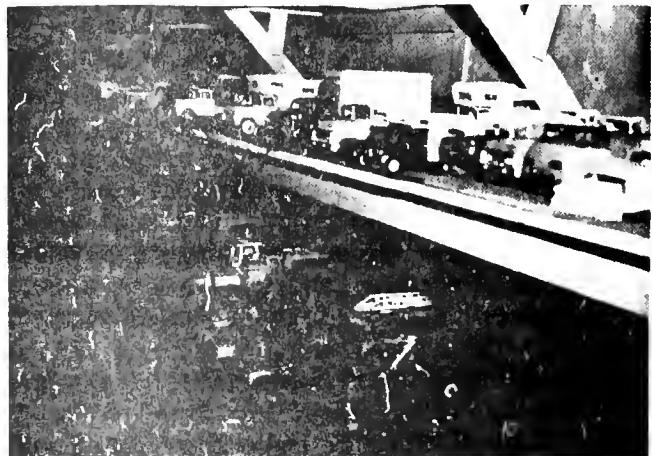
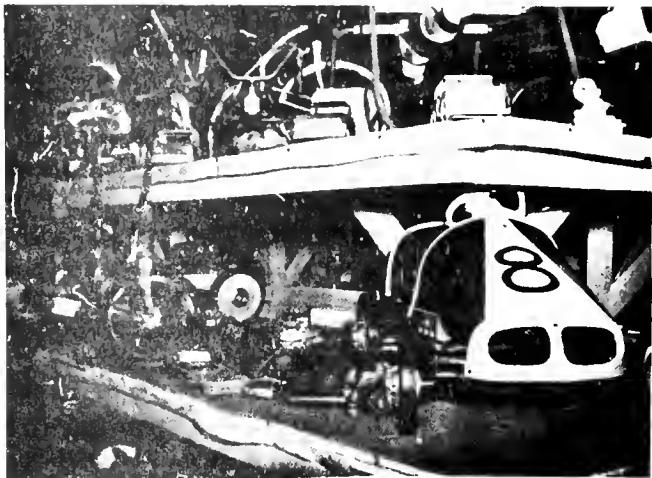
Would you believe that one of Santa's toy shops lies within the confines of Montana State Prison? Well, it does, and in the eight years of its operation it has averaged turning out over seven thousand refurbished toys each year for bright eyed youngsters on Christmas morn.

Mr. Harry Blodgett, Santa's right hand man in Montana supervises an inmate crew of three men in a year-round endeavor to see that children in the state receive that expected visit from Mr. Claus.

We watched as a tricycle was transformed from a beat-up piece of junk to a shiny bike that most any youngster would be delighted to receive.

Junk toys are picked up by various civic organizations throughout the state and delivered to the prison for a complete overhaul. After repair and a paint job they are ready for distribution.

Harry, and his crew of elves have received awards from the Head Start Program, The V.F.W., and the Jacees for their aid to Montana's children.



CHRISTMAS AT...

PAT & PATTI'S

I've related in earlier episodes how Pat and Patti caught a white rabbit while loaded on acid last Easter, and the infamous 'Donald Duck is Dead' hoax perpetrated at Itchycoo Park last 4th of July. This time I'd like to run it down about the grooviest Christmas ever, Christmas at Pat and Patti's.

It could have been the miniature strobe candles hanging from the five foot high marijuana plant in Pat and Patti's living room, or even the blinking multi-colored bulbs all over it tangled in the wispy angelhair in five different hues, but I believe what really did it was the actual tri-colored and clanging stop-light Pat had somehow picked up and installed from the roof so that it gave the effect of being right on top of the tree itself. Whatever it was that did it, it did a good job. The minute you walked in you were instantly zapped. Twisted Stoned! Bent! -and feeling groovy.

"Merry Christmas!" Railed Peter Pan as he flew around the room dropping Christmas tree bulbs on everyone's head.

"Wanna buy a duck?" Ben (Pat and Patti's huge mongrel bloodhound) inquired solicitously to no one in particular. It seemed like that was all he said anymore since he and Molly (the white rabbit) had fallen out over some catnip Ben had boosted at Uncle Ned's Pet Shoppe. Big caper. As it turned out Ben and Molly were arguing so hotly about it they never even noticed when Pat & Patti's kittens, Bonnie and Clyde, beat them both for it and went on a two day jag. Ben was brooding. The only thing that would placate him was for someone to put on a record by the Three Dog Night. I guess he felt some kind of warped kinship thing or something there, I don't know. Right now all eight speakers were blaring in all five rooms (packed with at least forty people) heavy-duty Janis Joplin action; Wailing, screaming, alive!

"What was that you said?" I asked a little mouse who was sitting on the floor next to me mumbling.

"I said 'feed your head', FEED YOUR HEAD!" He retorted indignantly. Big deal if you've heard one doremouse you've heard them all.

"Deck the halls with boughs of holly, aa-la-la-la-la= La-la-la-la!" Sang Peter Pan as he flew around throwing sprigs of poison-ivy at the merry celebrants.

"CLANG!" Went the stop-light as it changed from Stop to Go. People stopped and started.

And meanwhile, as throngs of people cheered and enjoyed themselves all over Pat & Patti's happy holiday house, deep in the basement there was gloom. Hundreds of termites wept, tossed and turned in a vain attempt to sleep.

Pat and Patti were passing out mugs of steaming Tom & Jerry's, each mug containing five heaping tablespoons of nutmeg, and soon everyone was getting stoned on the nutmeg alone, not to mention the alcohol content of said drinks.

"Wanna buy a duck?" Ben barked in the face of Chicken Little, who shrieked right back into his dogged face, "The roof's falling in! The roof's falling in!" Evidently Peter Pan had scored a direct hit with one of the bombarding bulbs.

"Down on mee...!" Sang Janis Joplin.

Patti slapped some pear shaped guy with a gray beard and dressed in a far-out red velvet suit for pinching her.

"Ho-ho-ho." He chortled and was telling her she had to be a good little girl or she wouldn't get anything for Christmas, until Pat got mad and punched him in the nose, only to get attacked by a maddened reindeer with a whoo nose.

"Help! Ben! Sic'em boy! Sic'em!" Pat wailed as the reindeer charged again knocking people all over the living room.

"Grrr!" Said Ben as he rushed across the room and bit a little boy on crutches who was just saying "Merry Christmas and God bless us each and every---oneeeeeooeeeeowWW !!"

"CLANG!" Went the stoplight and everyone stopped. Pat hid behind Mrs. Mary Worth, a nice matronly type lady who was passing out tea and cookies and trying to get everyone to quit stripping off branches from the Christmas tree and smoking them. In other words just making a general nuisance and pest of herself like she always did.

"Goshes!" A small, wide-eyed, big headed kid named Dondi said. "What a nice party, buddies!" Molly the rabbit bit him severely.

"Merry Christmas jerks!" Jovial Peter Pan sang as he flew by dumping polka-dot paint on everybody.

"Nice party, huh miss?" I politely offered to a chick sitting next to me.

"The roof's falling in! The roof's falling in!" She shrieked. It was Chicken Little again. Maybe it was the librally nutmegged Tom & Jerry's I'd had but she was one good looking chickadee. Ben thought so too, as he slid up to her with his baggy eyes rakishly half open and leered, saying seductively (for a bloodhound) "Wanna buy a duck?"

The much berated termites in the basement moved en masse to the attic to escape the clamor and roar of the partyers.

"CLANG!" Clanged the stoplight and the door crashed open with a wild-eyed guy on a motorcycle roaring in. He smashed into the whoo reindeer who was still searching all over for Pat. Now that the Hell's Angels were here I looked for the party to pick up and start to get a little lively.

Bonnie and Clyde (who had been nibbling on the innovated Christmas tree all night) were in hot pursuit of a long nosed Beagle who ran around on his hind legs wearing a World War 1 aviators cap and scarf, and were in turn being chased by a funny looking kid with a round head who kept saying "Good Grief!"

"A cool Yule and a Frantic First!" Gibbered Peter Pan, who had had too many Tom & Jerry's and Christmas tree cigarettes-flying upside down as he yelled, finally crashed into the ceiling up to his ankles. This was too much for the much harassed termites; the final straw. They then and there started munching away at the entire roof casing until down it fell, on everyone.

"I told you so." Said Chicken Little from under a mound of plaster and sawdust.

LUCKENBACK



CHRISTMAS IN PRISON

Christmas is almost here again, with all its mystery, its hope, laughter and joy...and all its sadness.

Somewhere outside our walls of confinement, there are those who will not have a Christmas, for one reason or another.

And yet, how many of us would quickly and gladly exchange places with those people simply because we do not have freedom and they do? They may have slim opportunities and thereby have a choice between happiness and unhappiness, but we as inmates have no choice at all. We cannot feel what they can feel and, feeling nothing, we have nothing.

Christmas has a distinct meaning to every individual, everywhere. The feeling for and about Christmas is limited only by attitude. It is a highly personal thing, controlled by desire and emotion.

It is doubtful that anyone in prison can ignore the absence of all the trappings and traditions of Christmas. They may resign themselves to attempt to make the best of the situation, but they cannot really quiet the little ache in the heart because they have no friends or loved ones near.

They cannot smother the loneliness and desire that sharpens the pain. The thought of everything a man is missing is enough to spoil any attempt at having a good Christmas.

There are those who might disagree with this notion, simply because of a difference in thought and temperament. The feelings and conditions however...are real enough.

From a social and familial viewpoint, Christmas is the most important time of the year by its very nature and tradition. It is a time to be together, to express love and hope and kindness, and to prepare for a better coming year.

If one is religious, it is a time for thanksgiving and prayer and adoration. If one is not, at least one is thankful to be alive.

There are a great many things that are a part of Christmas and everyone can think of them for themselves. Some mean a great deal, some not, yet they all have something to do with the Christmas season.

It is part of human nature that if a man is miserable, he wants everyone else to be miserable too. But that can work in reverse. As we think about Christmas and search for our own personal meaning, we find one thing in particular that leads to a maturity of thought...quite simply it is...trying to help someone else enjoy Christmas thereby sharing the enjoyment. Perhaps in some small way we may even make someone laugh. We may not call it happiness but it is the Christmas spirit...and certainly better than nothing.

There will be other Christmases ahead and we look forward to them because, for every one that passes us by now in prison, those future ones outside of prison will mean just that much more. We believe many within these walls share that feeling...and that in itself is a sign of some hope.





"Christmas day in prison is no exception that a Jay will sing. There will be very little singing. There will be very little or nothing to eat. There is the few decorations we can send to friends and relatives. What we are allowed to send is on lists. Last year the inmate sent cards to those he wished to send to make the season special to those he loves and is saying that there is little to share with one another."

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A.O.P. #22--

.....THOUGHTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS IN PRISON

"Joy, Love, Good will, the spirit of Christmas, memories of another time, and laughter surround another holiday it is true here there is little to do. Within our regular throughout the prison Christmas but the laughter and fun the most part. For most from our normal routine with our own thoughts. Far and large we live in our time with one another. We lost much in it's travel "Brotherly Love" will remain. The outward appearance of the institution."





"My views on Christmas in prison are not very complimentary of the prison as I have never known very many Christmases when I haven't been locked up in one place or another. From orphanages, reformatories to prisons the spirit of Christmas loses its meaning and love that Christmas is supposed to hold. Christmas is supposed to be a time of joy, happiness and well being. In prison it is a time of wishful thinking, loneliness and pain. Although this is true for a small percentage of people on the "outside", it is expanded and intensified within a person in prison. Magnified to such a degree that it becomes almost a physical pain."

In making a man spend Christmas, in prison should be avoided as soon and as much as possible. By placing yourself in an inmates shoes, how could anyone feel but disappointed, rejected and uncaring? What is there to offer your loved ones while you are here besides a card or a few gifts (if you can afford anything at all). There is little to be thankful for or enjoy at this time of year. Christmas in prison is the loneliest place in the world."

M.S.P. #22---

.....THOUGHTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS IN PRISON

"To some of us, December 25, 1970 will bring different emotions and feelings about the meaning of Christmas. To some it will be the first time that we have spent Christmas away from those that we know and love. Instead of sitting around a warm-lite fire and a Christmas tree with lots of presents, we will sit in thought and memories of what the past Christmases were like. Wishing that we were there to really appreciate this time of year. Is Christmas something that we are being deprived of, or are we missing the true meaning of Christmas. Is it the joy in giving and receiving presents? To see a tree decorated and your relatives coming? Is this what Christmas is about?

To me it's proof of God's love for us, as he gave us His only begotten Son on this day a long time ago. He came that we might have life eternal. What greater present to receive than this on Christmas day? Even though a person here may be away from the physical things that represent Christmas, we can still enjoy the true meaning of Christmas on the spiritual relationship that God has given us. To know and understand the true meaning of what Christmas is really about."

M.S.P. #22---



*Why not send
a*

CHRISTMAS CARD



to a
CONVICT

THE LONELY TREE





by Archie Warwick

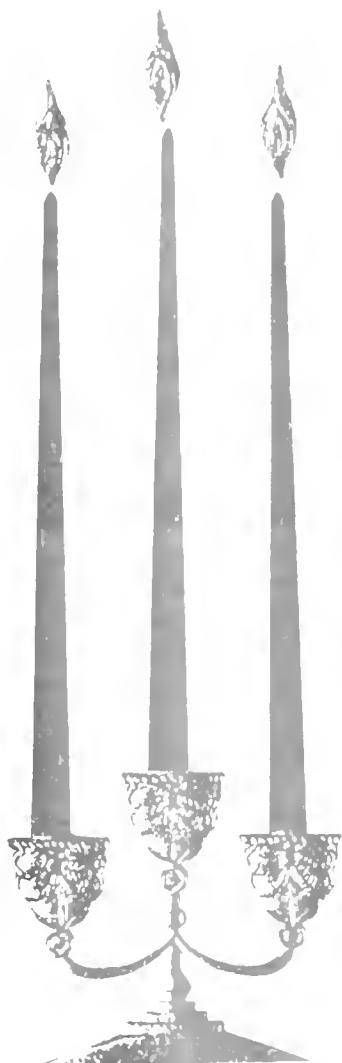
In the quiet of the forest with my branches spread wide, I listen to the snow flakes as they fall by my side. My branches catch a few of them, then more until my arms sag from the weight of them. I wonder if someone will come and get me this year. So I can stand proud before them all decorated and free. Free from this cumbersome weight about me. My thoughts go back to last year when they came and took the tree right next to me. It didn't have the fullness of branches that I had, but then maybe if I didn't, I wouldn't have this snow on me. When Spring, Summer, and Fall are here, my branches are spread wide and free. Why can't they come and get me at this time; then they could see the fullness of me. Birds and animals will come and nest in me and under me, why don't they come and surprise me. I want to be able to show them just how pretty I can be. To listen to the laughter of the children. To hear the songs of gaiety. To listen to the excited voices as they gather around the tree. To have them hang their stockings on me. To listen in the quiet of the night to the flickering firelight. To feel the warmth of those around as they sing carols to Him unbound. To be able to listen to stories as they unfold. To see and feel the excitement of the unfolding day...when the packages are all opened in glee and delight. To see the warmth and security in the eyes. To look and not have to say the words that express this special day. To know that Christ came this day a long time ago...to set man free from his burdensome load. Why doesn't he come and set me free. Don't they know that my very core wants to be set apart. To stand all trimmed, shiny and tall. To be wanted by one and all. To be a part of this wonderful day. Just to be decorated with special care.



All they have to do is come and cut me free.



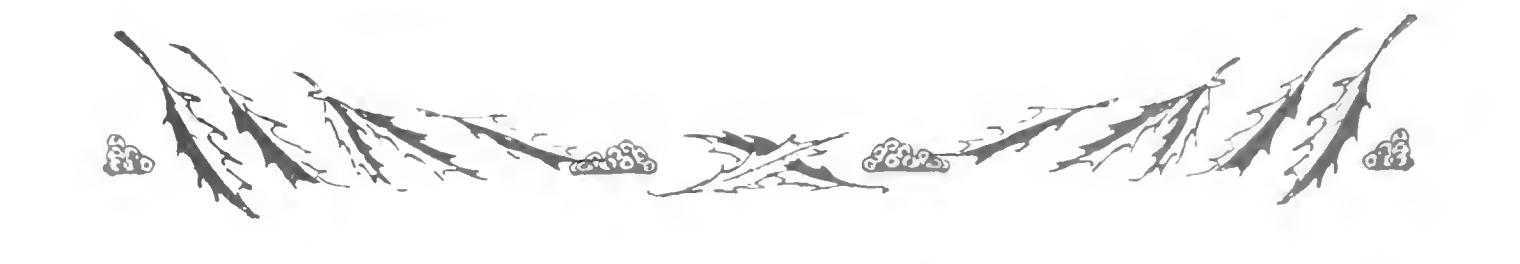
GOD IS A GOOD JOE



"Merry Christmas" were the last words the Reverend Whitman Ross uttered before he lost his voice and went into an apparent catatonic stupor. For nearly an hour afterwards a doctor listened to a procession of witnesses giving the same account of the Reverend's sudden illness. There was not a single fact, though, to help him plan a course of treatment. All he learned was that Reverend Ross delivered a stirring sermon about "Peace on Earth, Goodwill Toward Men," after which he wished his congregation a "Merry Christmas." There was absolutely nothing unusual about his behavior before it happened.

Of course there was no way for anyone to know that at that moment Whitman Ross was summoned by God. It was a strange sensation; in an unmeasurable instant the soul of Reverend Ross was standing to the right of his silent body, looking into the all-knowing eyes of the Man directly in front of him.

Somehow he knew the Man was God, even though He didn't appear to be any different from himself or the male members of the congregation...except for the eyes. Reverend Ross wondered, if those eyes were recording his entire life rather than seeing him as he was at the moment. Would they determine the destiny of his eternal soul? He fell to his knees. "Father," he said, "I've tried..."





And God laughed with the amused understanding of a friend. "Stand up Whitman," he chuckled. "Your not dead yet; what's the sweat?"

"But Father?" he pointed to his former self where several excited people had surrounded the body. Their concern was flattering.

"Don't worry, they'll take care of the old carcass until you need it. And by the way, don't call Me Father. Joe will do."

"I don't want to be disrespectful."

"How can you be disrespectful if you respect My preference?"

"That makes sense," the Reverend volunteered.

"Your darn tootin' it does, and so does the purpose of my visit. Now let's get down to business. You just finished a passable sermon..I've heard better...but sermons are words. They don't do the job, and that stuff tends to blur the real purpose of Man."

"I'm not sure I understand."

"Then you haven't thought it through Come, I'll show you! Take My hand."

In the blink of an eye the church was gone and they were standing near the perimeter of a Viet Cong encampment. The camp was under attack: jets were bombing, mortar shells were exploding, and the whine of bullets was all around them. Reverend Ross was startled to see a cavalcade of souls rising into the atmosphere. They seemed to drift to about an altitude of 100 feet and vanish.

"My God!" the Reverend burst out.. "the violence is awful." Then like a

small boy who had said a bad word, he looked at God for assurance.

"Well put Whitman, but for reasons you don't yet understand."

"Can you explain?"

"In time...in time. Isn't this a lovely way to spend Christmas Eve?"

"I'm ashamed."

"No reason for it, but let's move on. How about India?"

Reverend Ross didn't know the name of the city, but he immediately became aware of the disease and hunger that plagued the people in it. There was the same parade of souls rising and disappearing. However, there was a difference; infants and children accounted for the majority of the departing spirits.

"Fa.....Joe, I never dreamed....I" Reverend Ross couldn't finish. He had read the diluted reports of the suffering and deprivation in other countries; he had contributed to the church relief and missionary fund, but this! He felt helpless.

God knew his moods and his thoughts. "Whitman, you should get a hold on yourself. Those people are not dying, just transferring.

"Transferring? But there are millions who are not Christians, and more millions who are filled with sin..damned forever. Why, Satan, himself...."

"Whoa! I'm not one of your misled congregation."

Reverend Ross was stunned. Still, he didn't want to concede his life had been filled with useless, misleading work. Maybe there was an explanation,



something he didn't understand.

Before he had a chance to put his thoughts into words, God said: "Take My hand." Instantly they were standing on a hill, high above the most beautiful city Reverend Ross had ever seen. He could somehow see the people, the traffic, the lakes beyond, the birds the animals, the trees..everything was orderly; everyone young and happy. The sight filled him with awe. "What's this place?" he asked. "Heaven?"

"There are millions of planets like this in the universe, Whitman. They are the rightful heritage of man. Look." He pointed skyward just as a soul materialized about one hundred feet above the ground and floated gently to the surface. The moment it touched down, it took on the solid form of a very beautiful woman of about 25. Within seconds she was greeted by a young man descending from a land car. They talked for a moment and climbed into the car together before moving off at a rapid pace.

"Each new arrival is met and helped to make the transition. And once settled, they have eternity to develop their talents and souls. Even if this planet should pop out of existence, the souls would simply travel to another of their choice...they are indestructible."

Reverend Ross was bursting with questions. He didn't know where to begin, and before he could formulate a start God touched his hand and they were standing in a hospital room. The body of Reverend Ross was lying on a

high bed. A nurse was busy trying to insert a needle into an elusive vein without success. God chuckled at the frustration that motivated a soft female "damn it." Then He turned His attention to the Reverend Ross standing beside Him.

"Whitman," He said, "you have seen what no other mortal has seen. I know you don't understand, so I'm going to tell you how it is. First, when I created Adam and Eve..yes, they were real people; not very bright but real...I relinquished that part of myself that could be biologically transmitted to create an eternal soul with each new life. Man is the only species in the entire universe that can produce souls. Until recently he was doing the job rather well, so I left him to his religious superstitions and developing, sciences, but now both are interfering with the birth of souls that are entitled to an eternity of happiness on a billion worlds. Everytime a child starves or a young soldier is killed in battle, the purpose of producing...off-spring goes unfulfilled; souls are lost without coming into being.

"Excuse me Joe, but are you saying all souls enjoy eternal happiness?"

"That's exactly what I'm saying. There is no sin or Satan. They are simply tools of control used by men against men. I've let Man run his world, in a way he considered fit, and in the way that would make him happiest. It makes no difference to me whether he believes in the Koran, the Bible, or anamism; the souls are inevi-





tably mine. However, I will not stand by and see war, greed, and population control practified so extensively that it threatens the birth of deserving souls."

"What about the suffering that comes from too many millions of men, women, and children?"

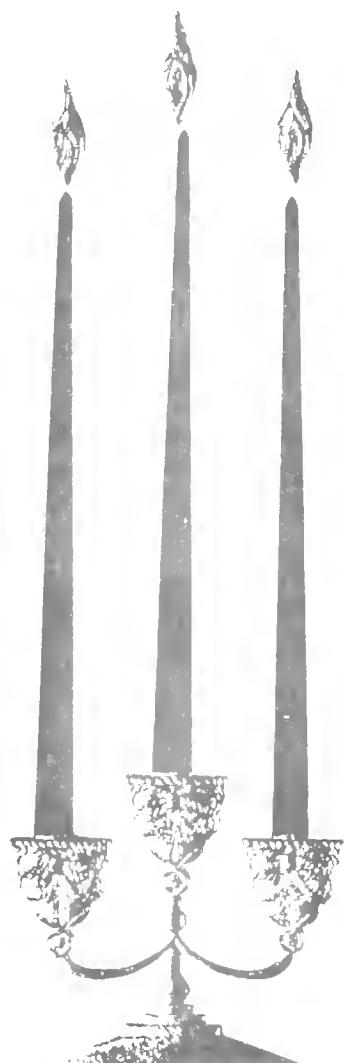
"The suffering is rewarded for eternity. Now it's time for you to return to your body, but I want you to remember the earth will not last for more than five million years before the sun novas. During that period there are hundreds of millions of other worlds to populate with the souls of Man. When earth dies there will be no place else for Man to live. Even with space travel he is bound to the one sun. I want you to forget your self-righteousness and be willing to live and let live; and to do unto others only as you would have them do unto you. Remember, your purpose in this life is to multiply and replenish the earth. Goodbye."

Before he could answer, Reverend Ross felt the sting of a needle probing his arm.

A short 40 years later, Reverend Whitman Ross was buried. There were no mourners because his 3,872 descendants were aware that he merely had passed on into his future of well-earned happiness.

God laughed. "I didn't think you could keep going there for awhile."

"Thanks, Joe. I wasn't too sure myself. But it was fun."



From the ISLAND LANTERN



POETS REST

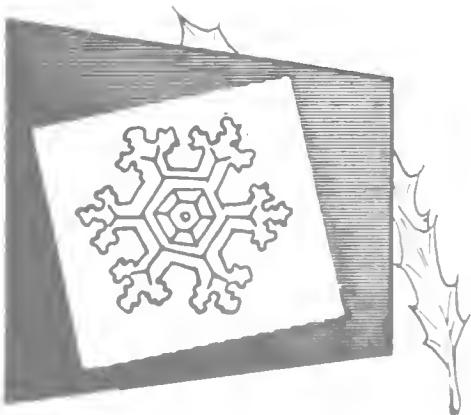
Christmas Eve, I Find Thee Weeping

Christmas Eve, I find thee weeping
Here within this barren plain
Yet I should have the heartbeat murmur
Rather than cry out in pain.

I would cloak the mind's remembrance
Of other trees, deeply emboss'd
In memory, rather than brood now
On stars that are forever lost.

The presents of the present are
Abstractions; empty-handed, me.
A taste of steel, cold-rolled and narrow,
Harbors my reality.

So save me, say I, all of this
And dampen down the ray
Of now, the best of every year:
It's just another day.





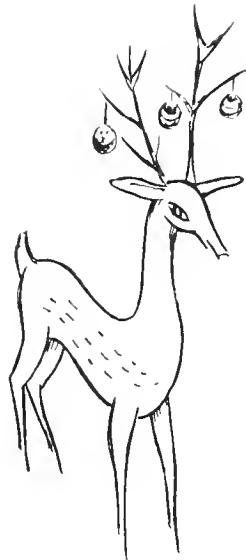
Christmas Lament

Last year Santa never came
Though my sock was in the bars.
I don't see how he missed these stonewalls
Reaching to the stars.

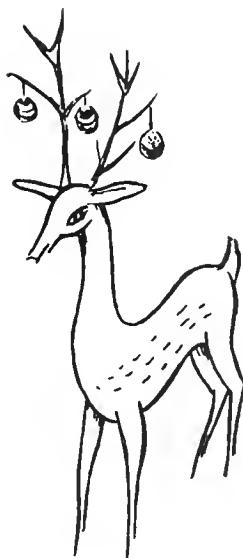
I know there is a lot of light
Shining through the windows,
But maybe Santa, now quite old,
Can't see past Rudy's nose.

Yes, old Santa never came,
Though once I heard a sound;
The jingle of his jingle bells?
Just some guard walking around.

Well, they say all things must end
And the Devil gets his due.
Though he hasn't shown these last nine years
Maybe this year he'll show through.



— 0 —



Tell me of the Christmas tree
As guiding star adorns the tip
That Pagan symbol of fertility
The Christian Commercial for a shopping trip.

Tell me of this stately fir
With ornaments and flashing lights.
Will through it joy and peace occur?
Do you sleep better on Christmas nights?

Cynical my thoughts might be
Concerning this all purpose tree.

But I have yet one thing to say
Before I put my pen away.

When sharing life is the guiding light
Christmas Eve is every night.





As 1970 draws to a close, we can look back with a great deal of pride of accomplishment in our sports endeavors.

Early this year, the M.S.P. Boxing Team proved to people across the state that the institution is capable of developing and showing a talented group of leather slingers.

For the first time in Prison history, Inmate Boxers represented the institution in various boxing events across the state...including the annual Inland Empire Golden Gloves Tournament in Billings and the Montana AAU Boxing Tourney in Great Falls.

In the Golden Gloves fistic fray, we came up with two runners-up for titles and in the AAU event, we can boast the big winner in the heavyweight division.

As the year draws to a close and the new Boxing season begins...the MSP Boxers are already off to a fast fistic start. (We'll elaborate on that in the following pages.)

The Basketball season (which is also about to get under way) proved to be a fruitful one for the MSP court and net crew at the close of the past season. There again we had a winner with the Inside "A" team showing up on top of the heap.

After Basketball and a turn for the better in weather, sports moved outside and onto the softball diamond. For three months, the MSP Inside nine showed all comers they were the team to beat. With some great competitive ballplaying, the Insiders roared into the winners circle to bring home the first place trophy in league competition.

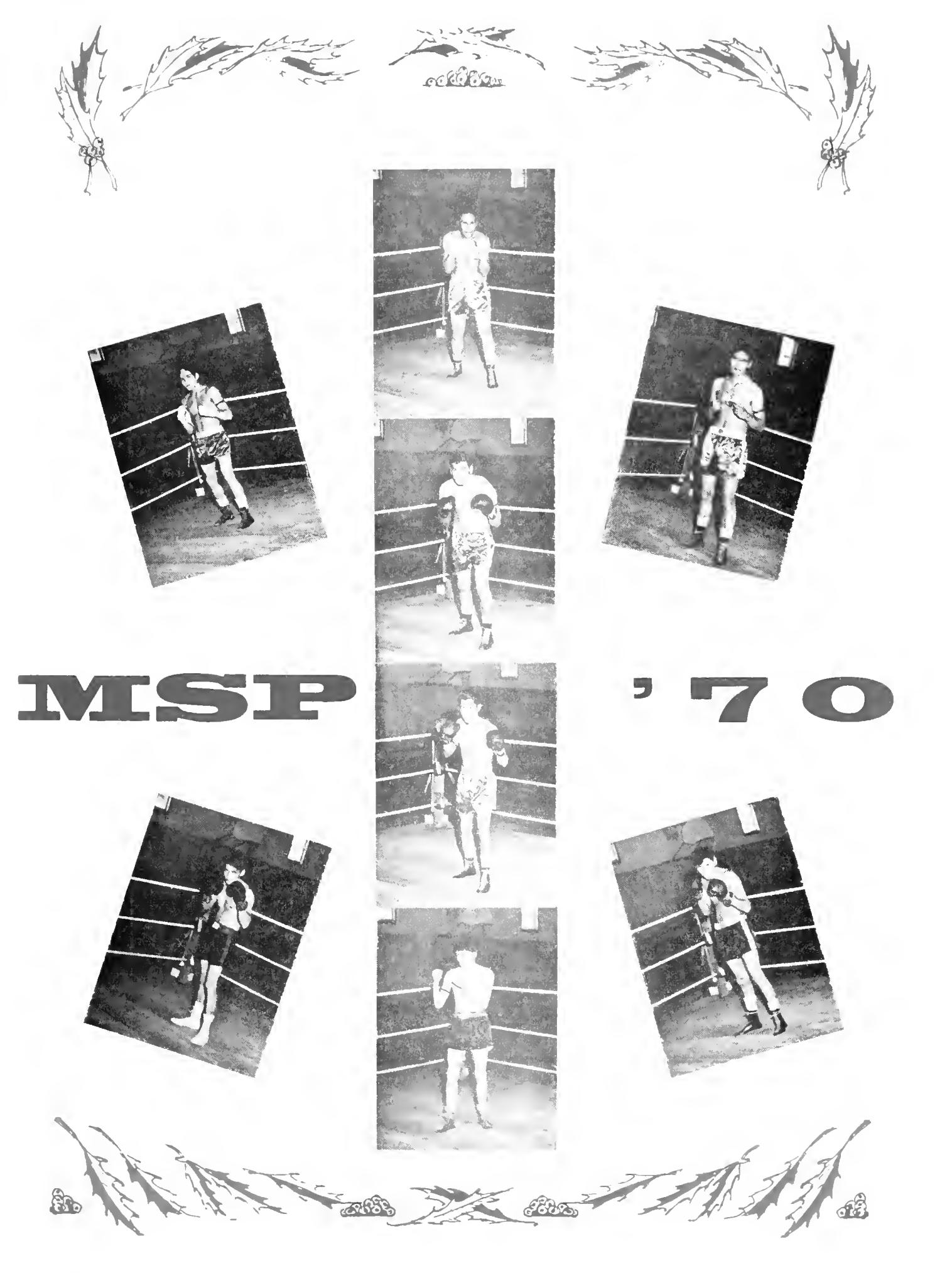
A tip of the topper is only fitting and proper to all concerned for their interest and efforts that have brought a bit of sports glory to add to the outstanding performances by MSP sportsmen of the past.

All in all it's been a very fruitful year on the MSP sport scene. And we're looking forward with eager anticipation to the coming season and year of sports activity.

Since the new Boxing season has just begun, let's take our first pictorial peek at the squared circle happenings of this new season in the ring. And...here's to another... successful outing here at MSP. SPORTS EDITOR.....



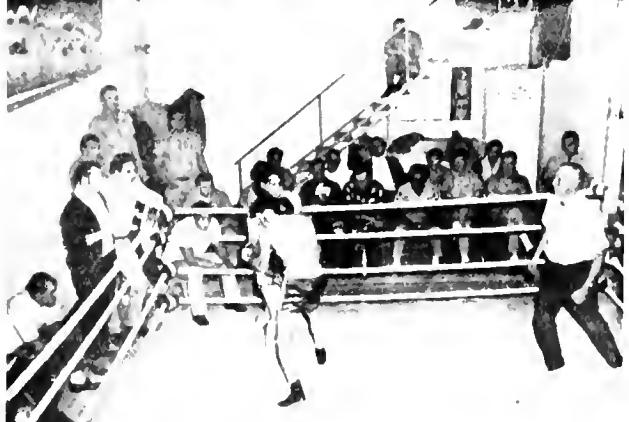
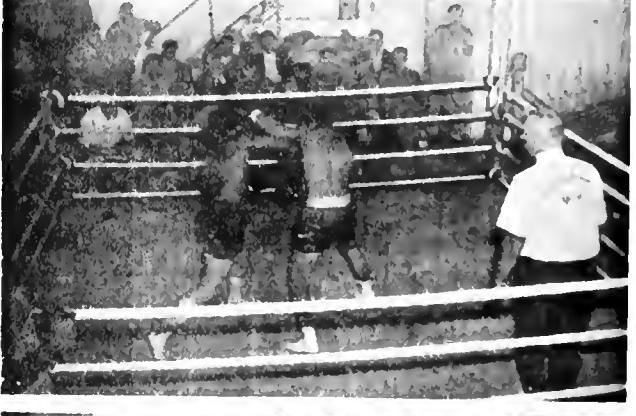
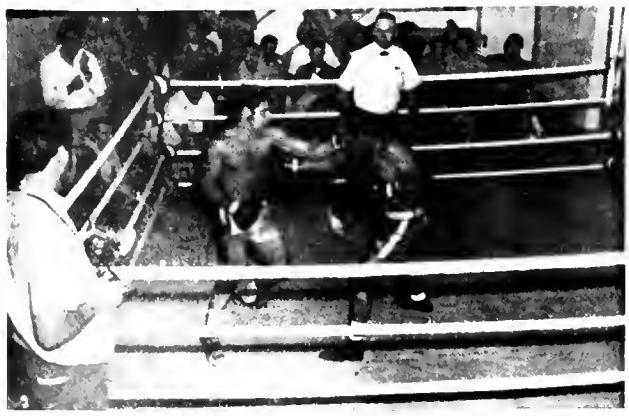
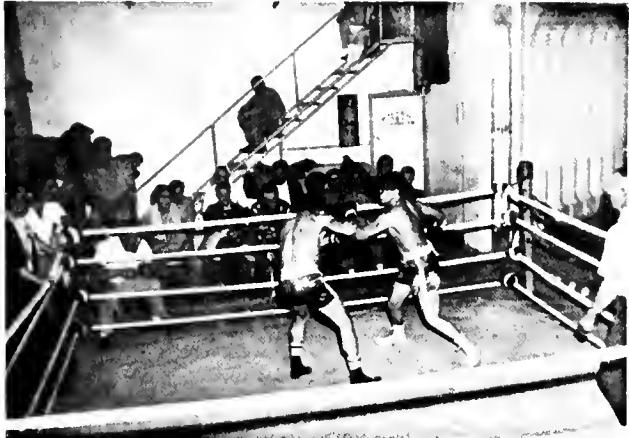
by
Gordie Wilkins

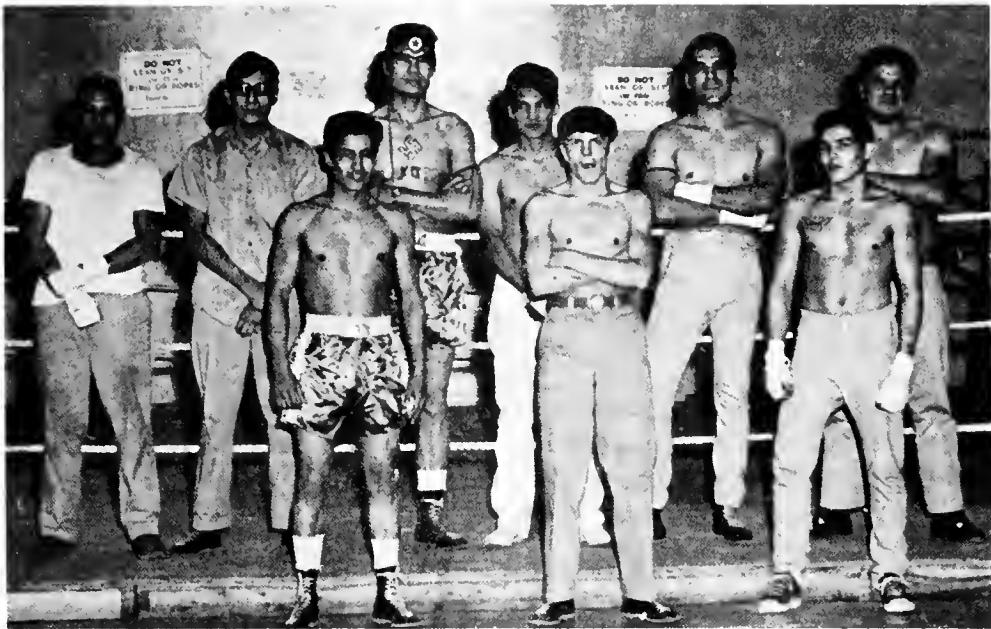


MISP

'70

BOXING





Rousing action within the confines of our squared circle here at M.S.P., took place on November 21st.

In an AAU sanctioned fight card, the Missoula Boxing Club brought some of their best ring talent to exchange leather with the pride of M.S.P.

Ten bouts in all were scheduled in this first outing of the season and the final count showed a 50-50 split with the MSP Boxers winning five and the Missoula Club winning five.

The action proved to be pretty heavy with Beauchamp of MSP getting the nod from the judges in the first three rounder. In the second bout, Garza of MSP brought an estimated crowd of 150 outsiders to their feet with a 25 second TKO in the first round. It appeared that the prison punchers were all set to walk away with the evening when Thigh of MSP decisioned his opponent from Missoula in the third fight of the evening. Then Missoula seemed to find the spark for winning and picked up decisions in the next two bouts.

Ford of MSP won on a close and hard fought fight by split decision in the first fight after intermission. And then it was the Missoula Boxing Club all the way in the next three bouts as they picked up two unanimous decisions and a big win via the TKO route.

The big fight of the evening and the one we'd all been looking forward to, was the heavyweight match between Potti Taluhoto of Missoula and MSP's reigning AAU Heavyweight king, Gary LaMere. Taluhoto, somewhat shorter than the MSP prize entry, did show fancy footwork but it was apparent in the early moments of round one that LaMere's heavy guns and classy style would prove to be too much for the Missoula boxer. LaMere put the pressure on early, hurting Taluhoto and it was his fight all the way to a unanimous decision...a pretty good way to cap the evenings event and all in all a great start for the MSP Boxers at the onset of the new fight season.



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In the Jan. '71 issue of.....

MP NEWS





IMBALANCE

It is always said that you have to take the bad with the good. That is all well and good, but what do you have to do while waiting for some of the rare good to offset the ever present bad?

EXTINCTION

With the number of super highways, big cities, factories, etc., ever on the rise, perhaps in the years to come Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees" will be changed to read, "I think that I shall never see, a tree".

MISCELLANEOUS

If I had it to do all over again, I shouldn't bother.

It has been said that time heals all wounds, but how does one fill up the emptiness that all this time has made? Maybe with Love.

Insanity is that condition of the mind which enables man to cope with the "sane" world while maintaining the correct outward appearance.

EN-GARDE

The pen is still mightier than the sword today. Just try arguing with an officer and watch how adept he is with his weapon.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

If anyone is thinking about hanging up their stockings on Christmas Eve in hopes of receiving something from good ole St. Nick, let them beware. They might awake to find that, not only did they not receive any gifts, but someone has acted truly, un-Christmas-like by stealing their socks.

BARE FACTS

It's a good thing that the attitude towards nudity is being relaxed, the way the laundry machine manages to devour clothes.

STICKY SITUATION

In an effort to get "high" without breaking existing laws, many of todays young people are searching for legal products that will meet these requirements. Recently, a newspaper article stated that some teens were discovered "shooting" things like mayonnaise and peanut butter.

CONVERSATION

In order to save time and paper when making out my New Year's resolutions this year, I'm only going to list the things that I don't want to change.

*Merry
Christmas*





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